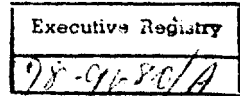


Washington, D.C. 20505



Dr. James B. Rhoads  
Archivist of the United States  
National Archives and Records Service  
Eighth and Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20408

Dear Dr. Rhoads:

Thank you for your letter of 14 July 1978 with its comments on the opportunities and obligations created by the issuance of Executive Order 12065 on "National Security Information." I am indeed aware of the special responsibility which falls on me to provide basic guidance on the classification review of documents containing information on intelligence sources and methods. I have a task force at work on the development of systematic review guidelines, and, as provided in the Order, these guidelines will be coordinated with your staff.

The CIA and NARS personnel who have been engaged in the classification review of 30-year-old records mandated by the old Executive Order 11652 have become increasingly conscious of the hazards which attend the review process. The evaluation of documents to identify information which may reveal intelligence sources and methods has proved to be extremely difficult and demanding even for experienced intelligence officers. This experience leads to some uncertainty about the degree to which we may be able to entrust the final review of intelligence records to individuals without intelligence experience. Such concerns cannot be ignored, but they do not in any way call into question the importance of carefully drawn, consistent declassification guidelines. However the process is to be carried out, such guidelines will be essential to its success.

In this important undertaking I look forward to continuation of the close cooperation which has characterized the relationships between NARS and CIA during the past several years. Our staffs must continue to work closely on the development of guidelines and procedures which facilitate the declassification of a maximum amount of information while protecting essential national security data.

Yours sincerely,

STANSFIELD TURNER